The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives a brief summary of important matters affecting labor, occurring in the industrial, legislative and judicial fields, and such other information that will benefit the trade union movement.

AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

The man who lives by hope will die by despair.—Italian proverb.

WHOLE NO. 864. WASHINGTON, D. C., SATURDAY, OCTOBER 29, 1927. VOL. 17, NO. 33.

DEMOCRACY CAN NOT BE JUDGED BY THEORY AND REMOTE IDEALS

New York, Oct. 29.—"If you say democracy is a failure, you must not compare it with some remote ideal," declared Bertrand Russell, English philosopher, in a joint debate with Dr. Will Durant. "When one looks at governments in past times, the undemocratic systems that have existed, have they been wise men who have governed the world? I think not.

"Do you suppose that if in this country you had a government of the best people—and by the best people I mean the 5 per cent who have the most money—do you suppose if you had a government of the just there would be anything like the money spent on education that is now spent upon it?

"The second great merit is that popular rule prevents certain forms of gross cruelty. In all the cases that history has ever shown us at the present day where one set of men has the power to govern another set of men, those who will have power will exercise the grossest cruelty they can use.

"If you are going to have people with self respect, who are not viewed with contempt, you must endow them with their share of power, for power is the one thing which in the long run brings the respect of others in the mass; and any class which is destitute of power will be despised and accused of every kind of crime and harried and ill-treated and subjected to cruelty.

"There is a third reason which I think in the present state of Europe is very obvious, and that is that democracy, when you can get it established in my country and your country, makes a more stable form of government and more easy to put up bulwarks against civil war and strife than any other form of government.

"In undemocratic countries you get insurrections, revolutions, all sorts of change of government by violent means."

NATION IS HARMED BY VOTE SLACKERS

New York, Oct. 29.—"Whenever politics is corrupt it is because the forces of corruption count upon the indifference of the average citizen," said United States Attorney Charles H. Tuttle, in an address at Elmhurst, Long Island.

"Whenever politics is played as a game and not as high-minded civics," he said, it is so played because the players find the average citizen willing to be a mildly interested onlooker.

"This indifference to politics, in the sense of science and practice of government, brings with it a sense of indifference to civic obligation. The vote slacker speedily becomes the jury slacker. The man who has no concern for his country's problems will soon have no respect for his country's laws. His relation to the nation will have no horizon other than self-interest.

"The remedy is to awaken the idea of public spirit as a dominant civic motive, as a working form of patriotism. On every hand there are eloquent critics of democracy, but democracy need fear no criticism save such as the indifference of its own citizens implies."

Mr. Tuttle said that the waning interest in politics presents one of the gravest problems of the hour everywhere in this country. "The indifferent citizen is a danger to the nation, yet this tribe is constantly increasing," he declared.

BRITISH UNIONISTS HAVE HEAVY BURDEN

London, England, Oct. 29.—The British Labor Party faces a gigantic task in the campaign to have each trade union member "contract in"—that is, individually agree that he will pay the levy, or assessment, of the Labor Party.

Under the old law a trade union, by a majority vote, could approve the Labor Party levy. If any member opposed such action, he could "contract out" by notifying the proper government official and he would be exempt from any penalty inflicted by the union on those who refuse to pay the assessment. Less than 100,000 members annually took advantage of this law.

Under the recent anti-trade union law jammed through Parliament by the Conservative government, the "contracting out" has been changed to "contracting in." Now every trade unionist must sign an individual declaration to the government officials that he desires to pay the political levy. No other political party is subjected to this handicap.

VICTIMS OF TORNADO HELD UP BY BUSINESS

St. Louis, Oct. 29.—Citizens who suffered property loss by the recent tornado are held up by dealers in window glass, who have raised prices 30 per cent.

The gougers attempted to place the blame on labor, but union workers showed that their wages are the same as before the disaster. The business men now plead that they are only selling glass at a loss and this is the first time we have had a chance to make any money."

REFERENDUM RETAINED

Corvalis, Ore., Oct. 29.—By a three-to-one vote the Oregon Federation of Labor rejected a proposal that the referendum system of electing officers be abandoned.

Senator McNary addressed the delegates on the need for farm relief legislation.

END OF DIPHTHERIA SEEN

New York, Oct. 29.—Diphtheria can be stamped out in this country in three years by the use of antitoxin, said officials of the American Child Health Association in making public the results of an experiment in 1923.

LAUNDRY WORKERS UNITE

Wenatchee, Wash., Oct. 29.—Laundry workers organized and have established a minimum wage of $18.

GUNMEN DEPUTIZED TO DESTROY STRIKE

Washington, Oct. 29.—A call for a trade union conference in Pittsburgh on November 14, to aid striking coal miners has been issued by President Green. The call was authorized by the A. F. of L. convention at Los Angeles, following a recommendation by the A. F. of L. executive council.

The conference will consist of representatives of national and international unions, the Pennsylvania Federation of Labor and city central bodies of that State.

The seven-months' strike of miners in western Pennsylvania, Ohio and other bituminous coal fields will be considered, as will the policy of Pennsylvania authorities in issuing commissions to coal and iron police who are paid by coal companies.

Miners and their families are evicted and the corporations' gunmen are unchecked in their terrorization campaign against workers and their dependents who have made every sacrifice.

Because of the attitude of the political powers who control the situation in Pennsylvania, the A. F. of L. executive council recommended the conference that plans may be formulated by which Pennsylvania workers can use their political power against these opponents.

The conference will convene at the Roosevelt Hotel in Pittsburgh, Monday afternoon, November 14, at 2:30 p. m.

MUNICIPAL SYSTEM ATTACKED IN COURT

San Francisco, Oct. 29.—The municipal-owned street car system of this city is attacked in court by secret and open foes. One hostile newspaper claims that the company lost $55,873 the past year, while ignoring extensions that have been paid out of profits.

The extensions include 32 miles of new trackage that cost $3,000,000, redeeming bonds valued at $2,000,000, purchasing 66 cars and 16 busses that cost $1,100,000 and $140,000 for tunnel construction. The company has a cash balance of approximately $500,000.

The Municipal Railway is the only street car line in the country that operates on the 5-cent basis.

The property consists of 74 miles of track and 27 miles of bus lines, operating 234 cars and 19 busses. The system's valuation is $30,000,000. This has not cost the people one cent in taxes. The annual saving to the people between a 5-cent and 8-cent fare is estimated at $8,000,000.

Friends of the Municipal Railway urge citizens to approve a bond issue to extend the system into other sections of the city. The question will be voted on at the election, November 8.

JURISDICTION BOARD LOSES ANOTHER BODY

York, Pa., Oct. 29.—The American Engineering Council's administrative board voted that this country withdraw from the National Board for Jurisdictional Awards in the building industry.

Rudolph P. Miller, chairman of the board, and the council's representative on the board, favored this action.

At the Los Angeles convention of the Building Trades Department, A. F. of L., the unions voted to withdraw from the board. They declared that employers ignored jurisdictional awards and that they were the only ones who "made any sincere attempt to comply with the provisions of the agreement."

UNUSUAL CONFERENCE IN HARD COAL SECTION

Mount Carmel, Pa., Oct. 29.—An unusual coal conference will be held here on November 9 to 11. It will be attended by coal owners, miners and state and government officials, who will not dispute over wages and work conditions, but on how to regain markets that have been lost to anthracite coal. High freight rates, tax assessments and the state's levy on hard coal production will be discussed.

John L. Lewis, president of the United Mine Workers, will attend.

"FAIR RETURN" CLAUSE IS OPPOSED BY SENATOR

Dallas, Tex., Oct. 29.—The "fair return" clause of the Transportation Act was assailed by United States Senator Mayfield in an address here. "This law gives the railroads the right to earn more than a fair return on their investment," the senator said. He charged that the act lead the carriers into wasteful expenditures, and expressed the hope that the next Congress will annul this feature of the law.

ANCIENT AND MODERN TYRANNY

Caligula, one of Rome's ancient tyrants, fastened his edicts on a pole that was so high they could not be read.

No Roman knew his rights, and violation of an edict brought torture and death.

Caligula's system—minus physical torture—is used by the labor injunction judge.

Under the labor injunction no citizen knows his rights. The judge is supreme. He orders "that any interference" with business is contempt of court, which he alone can punish.

The "interference" is not defined and constitutional guarantees are set aside. Anyone with a strikebreaker or even to refuse to work is "interference," and when a citizen is cited for contempt of court he is as helpless as were the Romans under Caligula.

In both cases the accused depends upon the tyrant's mood, rather than upon law.

Historians plead that Caligula was insane.

COLORADO PAYS USUAL PRICE

Defenders of the company "union" and employe representation ignore the I. W. W. uprising against the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company in southern Colorado.

This concern set up the first company "union" in the United States and the venture has been hailed as the last word in a scientific solution of the capitalist-worker problem.

Organized labor has repeatedly exposed the company "union." The United Mine Workers are conducting an organizing campaign in that section, where wages are lower than in organized fields. Colorado Fuel maintains its hostility to the union.

The unrest has been taken advantage of by the I. W. W.'s, and the revolutionists are again in their glory.

The company "union" defenders will denounce the I. W. W. while ignoring causes that the revolutionists are capitalizing.

When anti-union employers develop capacity to reason from cause and effect, they will abandon their present policy.

"REDS" ARE FAVORED BY TRADE UNION FOE

Chicago, Oct. 22.—William H. Barr, president of the National Founders' Association, accepts Communism rather than organized labor.

This position of a bitter anti-unionist is logical, and again proves that when the test comes reaction and revolution are affinities.

Mr. Barr expresses his view in a circular to members of his association. He calls on business men not to be alarmed at the Communists, but to watch trade unionists lest they destroy employers' control of workers by a system of individual bargaining which he insists on calling the "open" shop.

He is not sure Communism is a menace, and resorts to the old trick of quoting a "well-known business man," who is alleged to say: "How many business men of prominence before the public can you name that are fighting this 'Communism thing'?

"Mark my word, organized labor in time will go before the public and explain in effect, with every chance of having their message believed, 'We saved the country from Communism and are therefore justly entitled to business men's support, as they did nothing, or very little, to stem the tide.'

"Methinks the public is going to give a lot of credence to a claim of this kind, and, believe me, if they do, the 'open' shop cause is going to be very much damaged."

RECORD DIVIDENDS OUT OF LOW WAGES

New York, Oct. 29.—Sweated labor in 5 and 10-cent stores is notorious, but few are aware of the high dividends paid by these low-wage corporations.

That these stores can pay a living wage to girl employes is indicated by the following letter to a local financial journal:

"On August 15, 1915, I bought 10 shares of Woolworth at 105, total $1,050, and have received 68 shares more in stock dividends and split-ups, and now have in all from that original 10 shares 78 shares, worth at present market price about $14,400, locked up in a safe box.

"Have also received in cash dividends about $1,600 more, and this added to the value of the stock, makes $16,000. Not so bad, is it, especially when I went against advice of some friends who said I was a fool to put my money into a 5 and 10-cent store."

PRIMARY LAW UPHELD; REACTION SURPRISED

Washington, Oct. 29.—The refusal of Maine citizens to repeal the primary law of that state has surprised reaction throughout the country. This element was confident a mass attack on the primary would eventually reestablish the convention system with its bought-and-paid-for delegates.

The Maine verdict is doubly significant because that state is imbued with "Down East" conservatism.

It is quite probable that from now on less will be heard of primary-law repeal in other states.

NO LAW IN RUSSIA; FREEDOM IS DENIED

New York, Oct. 29.—"Laws in Communist Russia are a joke," said Silas B. Axtell, marine lawyer, of this city, who was an unofficial member of the delegation that recently visited Russia.

"Strictly speaking," said Mr. Axtell, "Russia has no laws, only decrees handed down from above. There is no guarantee of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, no freedom of speech, press or assembly, no secret ballot. The press is run by the government and there is no opposition press.

"My impression of Russia is that it may drag along for 100 years as an isolated state, but it will not get anywhere. Civilization there will not improve under a Communist government. Russia is the most unhappy and dismal place I ever visited."

Members of the delegation are not as keen on the Soviet regime, according to Mr. Axtell. The majority favor recognition by the United States. This will be urged before the commission sailed to Russia.

The commission included three trade unionists. The venture has been repudiated by the A. F. of L., but it is referred to in some sections of the public press as "the American labor delegation."

WHY COAL MINERS STRIKE

From United Mine Workers' Journal

Much has been said by soft coal operators with the United Mine Workers, meaning, in the last analysis, of paid non-union miners in West Virginia, Northern operators—many of them—like Scale and corrupete. Officials of again that this argument is sophistical to break the union.

The labor cost of bituminous coal consumers pay from $5 to $8 per ton, and more at the mine. The miner gets less than a gets the difference?

This is the answer to the competitive, but it is undisputed. A change in union or non-union workers, nor operators' wage base to a lower level and further enslave the workers.

Any wage theory that permits the employer to dictate what the worker shall educate his children, is morally wrong. The United Mine Workers are constitutionally opposed to such a plan and will resist it to the utmost. That is why the competitive wage theory, talked of so blithely by the operators, will never be a fundamental of the organized coal industry.

OFFICE WORKERS UNITE TO GET DECENT WAGE

New York, Oct. 29.—The Bookkeepers, Stenographers and Accountants' Union is organizing office workers employed by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company. Open-air meetings are held in the vicinity of the company's headquarters and speakers charge that wages are below the living line.

Banners displayed at the meeting read: "The Metropolitan Insurance Company does everything for its office workers except pay them a living wage."

The union has made public, letters from prominent men and women in which sympathy for the organizing plan is expressed. Fannie Hurst, the novelist, writes:

"It appears that investigation reveals the surprising fact that a mutual co-operation organization of colossal proportions pays a weekly wage as low as $12 to its girl office workers. Behind this condition, and in the face of the natural 'white collar' timidity of the office workers, employes of this great organization are attempting to organize. The right of such workers for the unionized protection of a wage scale seems uncontroversial."

SMOKE IS MENACE

Cincinnati, Oct. 29.—Smoke is one of the greatest enemies to health, declared the American Public Health Association in calling upon state and municipal authorities to abate the smoke nuisance.

Smoke produces serious effects upon health by intercepting the vitalizing rays of the sun through its constant inhalation, it was said.

FALSE FRIENDS OF CHILDREN EXPOSED BY UNION TEACHERS

New York, Oct. 29.—Organized public school teachers in this city refuse to class the National Manufacturers' Association as a foe to child labor. These employers recently declared it was necessary to "protect" working children, and presented a program for public acceptance.

The Union Teacher denounces Wiley H. Swift, acting general secretary of the National Child Labor Committee, for his approval of the program. The Child Labor Committee is called upon to repudiate their secretary's statement "which has not only discouraged but endangered the friends of child children in our State."

"If the National Association of Manufacturers and Mr. Swift on their pay rolls he could hardly have rendered them more efficient service," the Union Teacher states.

"In order to justify his praise of a program that is essentially reactionary and a menace to advanced child labor legislation now on the statute books of the more advanced states, Mr. Swift is forced to use the most backward states in the Union as a basis for comparison: states whose labor legislation is a blot upon the humanitarianism and fair name of America. How utterly unjustifiable is Mr. Swift's appraisal can be realized only when our readers learn that the laws of half a dozen states are already far in advance of the program proposed by the N. A. of M., and that this program falls below even the minimum standards of the National Child Labor Committee has laid down as essential to do justice to the children.

"In the light of these facts, we are led to believe that the N. A. of M. has made serious inroads upon the morale of the Child Welfare Committee. This is a menacing situation."

"If a New York employer applied the N. A. of M. program in his factory he would violate the laws of this State," said Abraham Lefkowitz, chairman of the Teachers' Union's committee on experimental schools' legislation.

Mr. Lefkowitz ridicules the claim that children can be "protected" by discharging them from school when they pass the sixth grade and by issuing them employment certificates.

"Where a previous provision of the law provides that such immature workers are to have additional education while employed, such as continuation, part-time instruction, the N. A. of M. would have the law amended to permit some non-described authority to release individuals incapable of further education' from attending at any such supplemental instruction."

The "protection" would also permit children under 16 to be worked an additional four hours a week and employers could hold children until 9 p. m.

Colorado Fuel Co. Pulls Old Trick; I. W. W. Imported To Block Strike

Denver, Oct. 29.—The Colorado Fuel and Iron Company imported I. W. W.'s into the southern Colorado field to "stage" a strike in the hope that the unionization campaign of the United Mine Workers could be checked. The I. W. W.'s have gone beyond the program arranged and the situation can not be controlled by the company.

The above charges are made by the Colorado Labor Advocate in a leading editorial.

"It was evident to the company," says the trade union publication, "that conditions for organization of the southern fields were ripe, especially since the operators of Illinois and other States in the central competitive coal field granted the miners the Jacksonville scale for which they have been on strike six months. To create agitation for a wage increase the 'Wobblies' were sent into Las Animas and Huerfano counties. The ruse was a success. The miners were ready for organization and the game started.

"Apparently the C. F. and I. thought that the small increase would at once put the game 'on ice' for them. It seemed entirely likely that the miners would be satisfied and would forget their troubles. But they didn't.

The Colorado Fuel Company's use of the I. W. W.'s to check the legitimate union is in line with that corporation's policy 14 years ago, when the United Mine Workers were defeated in a strike that culminated in the Ludlow horror and the C. F. and I. company "union."

This "union" was condemned by the United States Commission on Industrial Relations, which said:

"The effectiveness of such a plan lies wholly in its tendency to deceive the public and lull criticism, while permitting the company to maintain its absolute autocracy.

"It need scarcely be pointed out, first, that the plan outlined by the letter and spirt of the law of does not provide an effective organization of the company's own employees, and, second, that if it did the employees would still be unable to maintain collective equality without the support of a national or international union such as only the United Mine Workers can give."

These predictions have been fulfilled. With the company "union" discredited, Colorado Fuel grants a small increase and imports Cobblies to stage a strike in the hope that agitation will be checked.

COLORADO COAL MINERS RECEIVE $2.70 PER DAY

Denver, Oct. 29.—Coal miners of this state earned $2.70 a day the first eight months of this year, according to James Dalrymple, coal mine inspector. The miners worked 124.2 days since the first of the year. This is an average of 15½ days a month. The wage scale in Southern Colorado was $5.20 a day. This is lower than in unionized fields, but it has been accepted by the company "union" of the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company.

The Rockefeller concern refuses to treat with the United Mine Workers, and is now facing an I. W. W. uprising, with the usual quota of raids, arrests and attempted deportations.

Australian Workers Victimized; Must Depend On Trade Unions

Washington, Oct. 29.—Australian labor papers received at A. F. of L. headquarters indicate a serious situation in the Commonwealth of Queensland, controlled by the Labor Party.

The labor premier, Mr. McCormick, dismissed 100 railway workers employed on government-owned railways. The Australian Railways' Union took up these cases, and the premier ordered that all members of the union be dispensed with on a certain date.

The trouble started over a small strike of sugar mill workers who objected to foreigners being employed in preference to Australians.

"The situation is charged with most unexpected and grave possibilities," says the Melbourne Labor Call. "It is generally acknowledged that Mr. McCormick has a grouch against the Australian Railways' Union and is bent on smashing its militancy. It's a big job and a stupid one."

There are more than 11,000 railway employes in Queensland. They are organized in the Australian Workers' Union, Australian Railways' Union, Locomotive Men Guards' Association, Amalgamated Engineering Union and the Traffic Employes' Association. These organizations are standing behind the union directly affected, and Premier McCormick is classed as a "Mussolini" by the entire Australian labor movement.

Following this attack on Queensland unions, the cables report the defeat of the Labor Party in New South Wales. This reverse is credited to the Communists, who divided the workers.

AUTOCRATIC IDEALS FOREIGN TO AMERICA

New York, Oct. 29.—"There can be no compromise between American and Fascist ideals," declared Dr. Charles Fama, American citizen of Italian birth, and captain in the United States Medical Reserve Corps, replying to a contrary statement by Count Ignazio Thaon di Revel, president of the Fascisti League of North America.

"My fight on Fascism is a fight against this enemy of Americanism," said Dr. Fama.

"Any one who has accepted Fascism in this country ought to be deported. An American citizen who has sworn allegiance to Mussolini ought to have his citizenship revoked."

Dr. Fama called attention to Mussolini's famous dictum: 'My order is that an Italian citizen must remain an Italian citizen, no matter in what land he lives, unto the seventh generation.'"

Dr. Fama also discussed in detail the Fascist oath and said:

"In the case of every new Fascist post organization, in every banquet or festivity, telegrams of homage, fidelity and discipline to the Duce Mussolini have been sent. Next to President Coolidge or any other official of our government."

GIGANTIC POWER LOBBY PREDICTED BY PINCHOT

Washington, Oct. 29.—Gifford Pinchot, former Governor of Pennsylvania, predicts that "the most extensive lobby the power interests ever brought together" will be in the nation's capital this winter to kill bills for the disposal of Muscle Shoals and for the completion of Boulder Dam.

"Already," said Mr. Pinchot, "we are hearing the old story that any interference with the natural rights of the power monopolists to practice extortion on the people constitutes anarchy, socialism, bolshevism and communism, and will lead to the downfall of the republic. The theory is that the government should do nothing for the people and the monopoly everything for them.

"I am not a government-ownership man, but I sometimes wonder how this nation has managed to get along with the government delivering the mail every morning."

CANAL WAGES UP

Ottawa, Canada, Oct. 29.—Wage increases for employes on the Welland ship canal are announced by Minister of Labor Heenan. The award is retroactive from August 1.

CAN ABOLISH UPPER HOUSE

London, England, Oct. 29.—The Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, the highest tribunal in the British Empire, has ruled that Nova Scotia has power to abolish its upper legislative chamber.

PICTURE PRODUCERS WORK "UNION" TRICK

New York, Oct. 29.—Motion picture actors were tricked into dropping the Actors' Equity Association when that unit of the American Federation of Labor started an organizing campaign in Los Angeles to check wage cuts.

The charge of trickery is made by Photoplay and the Film Mercury, trade papers in this industry.

The producers organized at the progress made by Equity, and assembled their company "union," known as the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences. The actors were banqueted and induced to abandon all thought of trade affiliation.

The trade paper Photoplay suggests that the cost-of-arms for the company "union" be a field of blue sky with a garland of poison ivy rampant. The writer says: "The hands that sign the pay checks directed its first decisions and justified our former statement that it was conceived in insincerity and born with the stigmata well of bunk.

"The grand ideals announced at that dinner have faded like thin air. Its first and only function was to serve as a catspaw to pull the producers' chestnuts out of the fire lighted by their salary cut ultimatums.

"Hail and farewell, Academy!"

The Film Mercury makes this reference to motion picture stars who were tricked:

"Had some of these selfsame players listened to Equity instead of to the glowing, sugar-coated hypocritical speeches of the Academy, all reports they would be better off today. They lost a golden opportunity. Even the speechless have felt the sting and are now kicking themselves for being fooled."

SMALL TEXTILE SHOPS OPPOSED BY UNIONISTS

New York, Oct. 29.—Small contracting shops are the greatest menace to the cloak industry, according to officials of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union. Work standards are ignored and large employers who recognize the union agree that this demoralizing influence must be checked.

Many of the employers encourage the union to stabilize work conditions.

UNEMPLOYMENT RISE IN STATE REPORTED

Poughkeepsie, N. Y., Oct. 29.—Cities and towns throughout this state face general unemployment, according to delegates to the annual conference of the State Association of Child Welfare Boards.

Increased appropriations will be needed to take care of this winter's welfare work, the delegates said. These conclusions are based on investigations into the needs of children.